

The charter creates in place of Allegheny county a consolidated city and county government to be known as the "City of Pittsburgh". This "consolidated city" is to have all the powers of the present Allegheny county, the powers with regard to the care of the poor and insane now possessed by the present city of Pittsburgh and the directors of the poor, and certain other specified powers. The present city of Pittsburgh, and the other cities, boroughs and townships of the county remain in existence within the consolidated city with their present names and boundaries. The present city of Pittsburgh is still called simply "Pittsburgh" as distinguished from the consolidated city. The great bulk of the powers now belonging to "Pittsburgh" and the other units will continue to be exercised by them.

The present elective county officers will continue to be elected as at present, except the treasurer who is to be appointed by the board of commissioners. No officer is to retain any fees but they are to be paid over to the treasury of the consolidated city.

The consolidated city is to be governed by a board of seven commissioners, elected at large for four years. Three must reside in the present Pittsburgh, and three in districts outside of the present Pittsburgh and, after 1931, the president will be elected at large. The present county commissioners are continued for the balance of their term as members of the new board. At the election of 1929 three members will be elected from outside of Pittsburgh for four years and one member for two years, and for these two years the board will choose its own president.

There will be the following administrative departments: Finance, Health, Safety, Public Works, Welfare, Parks and Recreation, Planning, Art, Personnel, Law, Research and Information, Transit. The heads of each of these departments in general have power to appoint and remove all officers and employes thereof.

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The charter contains the following features: (a) Unification of Woodville and Mayview now respectively administered by the directors of the poor and the city department of welfare. (b) Designation of through-traffic streets which henceforth will be maintained by the consolidated city. (c) Planning and zoning powers which do not interfere with the similar powers of Pittsburgh and other units. (d) Power to create special districts for the purpose of supplying works, utilities or services such as sewage, garbage disposal, etc. not for the benefit of any one municipal division. (e) Ample powers to solve the water problem which at the same time safeguard the rights of Pittsburgh and other cities owning water plants. (f) Power to deal broadly with the problem of rapid transit. (g) Power to make uniform regulations with regard to traffic on through-traffic streets and with regard to signs, signal lights and other physical devices for the control of traffic anywhere in the consolidated city. (h) Power to pay for public improvements by special assessments on property within the district benefited by such improvement.

No elective officers are ripped out of office -- all are permitted to serve out their terms. Appointive officers of the county, of the directors of the poor and of the city departments of welfare and transit are all continued in office for the time being with few exceptions. Positions for the few officers displaced can readily be found in the process of organizing the new government. The pension rights of the employes of Allegheny county and the city of Pittsburgh who are transferred to the consolidated city are completely protected.

The charter safeguards the taxpayers' money by (a) giving the controller adequate auditing powers with a permanent appropriation of \$25,000.00 a year for investigations; (b) establishing a department of finance under a director; (c) providing for a uniform modern accounting system; (d) an effective budget, and (e) an audit by certified public accountants every four years; (f) establishing a department of research and information under a non-political board with a permanent appropriation.



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A fair assessment of property for taxation is guaranteed by (a) assessment according to methods used in the most progressive cities by a consolidated city assessor assisted by local assessors locally appointed and paid for by each municipality; (b) providing a board of assessment appeal appointed by the common pleas court.

The charter will promote public health by providing a health department with power to make and secure enforcement of regulations through local health authorities wherever they exist and directly in other parts of the consolidated city.

The charter will promote public safety by creating (a) a small metropolitan police force organized on the lines of the state police for the purpose of policing the rural districts and which may be used by other municipalities upon request; (b) a metropolitan detective bureau; (c) a traffic division to enforce traffic regulations; (d) a fire prevention division.

Better justice for the ordinary citizen is secured by abolishing the justices of the peace, aldermen and magistrates. (Those in office will be permitted to serve out their term). In their place there will be a municipal court made up of from thirty to forty-five salaried judges appointed by the county court for terms of five years. In this court there will be established a small claims division in which cases involving less than \$50.00 may be heard informally with costs not to exceed \$1.00. Sessions of the municipal court will be held throughout the county in such a way as to serve the convenience of suitors in the court. Constables will henceforth be appointed by the judges of the municipal court. (Provided that those in office may serve out their terms).

The charter protects the interests of the outlying communities by preventing forcible annexation. Annexations henceforth can take place only as a result of a favorable vote of the people in both the annexed and annexing municipalities.





The charter is to be submitted to the people on the fourth Tuesday of June 1929.

ABSTRACT OF THE PROPOSED CHARTER ARTICLE BY ARTICLE

ARTICLE I. GENERAL PROVISIONS. - This article provides for the creation of the consolidated city and county to be known as the "City of Pittsburgh". All laws relating to the government and offices of Allegheny County are expressly incorporated as part of the charter and henceforth can be amended or repealed only by amendment to the charter. All other laws applicable to Allegheny County are continued in force except as inconsistent with the charter.

The cities, boroughs and townships of Allegheny County are continued in existence with their present names and boundaries except that the present city of Pittsburgh is to be officially designated as "Pittsburgh" unless the corporate authorities of that city select some other name. Except as specifically provided by the charter, the cities, boroughs and townships are to be governed by the laws relating to the class of municipality to which they belong.

A special saving clause keeps in effect laws relating to courts of record, juries and jury commissioners, public schools, public libraries and state highways as if the consolidated city were a county only and not a city.

The property and indebtedness of Allegheny county and of the directors of the poor and the property and indebtedness of the present city of Pittsburgh now administered by its department of welfare and the property rights and corresponding debts of any unit in such through-traffic streets as may be designated by the board of commissioners are transferred to the consolidated city.

ARTICLE II. POWERS. - In addition to the county powers, the most important powers given to the consolidated city are: (a) to care for the poor, sick, defective, feeble-minded and insane; (b) to make health regulations (the muni-





cipal division may make health regulations not in conflict with those of the consolidated city); (c) to designate through-traffic streets which will be maintained by the consolidated city, (the cleaning and lighting of through-traffic streets is left to the locality); (d) to adopt zoning ordinances (in all the municipalities which have not by Jan. 1, 1933 adopted zoning ordinance); (e) to exercise planning powers (relating to major features only); (f) to create special districts for the purpose of acquiring, constructing, maintaining and operating or contracting for works, improvements, utilities or services for the benefit of more than one municipal division (this power will make it possible to take care of serious drainage problems etc.); (g) to deal with the water supply problem (the rights of the existing municipalities are carefully preserved. No municipal water system can be acquired except by a majority vote of the people of the municipality which owns the plant and no municipal or private plant can be acquired except in accordance with the general laws of the state which amply provide for just compensation); (h) to construct, operate or contract for the operation of transportation systems, (this power is broadly phrased in order to give the consolidated city ample power to deal with the rapid transit problem); (i) to recommend standards for local fire departments and to make appropriations in aid of local fire departments; (j) to enact smoke regulations; (k) to make uniform traffic regulations for through-traffic streets and to regulate the type and manner of installation of signs, signal lights, etc. throughout the consolidated city; (l) to levy special assessments upon the district benefited by any public improvement.

The employes of the county of Allegheny, of the directors of the poor and the welfare department and transit commission of the city of Pittsburgh are transferred to the service of the consolidated city and protected in their present positions and salaries until the same are modified in accordance with the regular administration of the consolidated city. The rights of the employes of Allegheny county and of the city of Pittsburgh under the pension laws now relating to them are absolutely preserved.



ARTICLE III. BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS. - The powers of the consolidated city, except as otherwise specifically provided, are to be exercised by the board of commissioners, of six members and a president. They are to be elected at large but three of them must be residents of the city of Pittsburgh and one of each of three districts (roughly east, south and north outside of Pittsburgh). The president, beginning with the election of 1931, is to be elected at large and is to be the chief executive officer of the city.

For the first two years the present county commissioners are to be the Pittsburgh representatives on the board; at the election of 1929 members will be elected from the outside districts and another member elected at large for two years. For the first two years the president is to be chosen by the commission from among its own members.

The salary of the president is to be \$15,000 and the salaries of the commissioners \$9,000 (salaries of the present commissioners are to remain as they are for the balance of their terms). The board of commissioners is to choose a vice-president and a secretary.

Provision is made for regular meetings. Special meetings can be called only on twenty-four hours written notice. Four affirmative votes are necessary for the passage of any ordinance or resolution. An abstract of each ordinance must be published in a newspaper within three days of introduction and all ordinances must be printed and on the desks of the members for forty-eight hours before any action can be taken with regard to them, except in case of emergency ordinances. The board of commissioners must keep a journal in which the yeas and nays of each ordinance are to be recorded, and the journal is made a public record.

In this article an effective budget system is provided for. The budget must include the estimates of the several departments of their needs and the recommendation of the president of the board of commissioners with regard thereto.



ARTICLE IV. COUNTY OFFICERS. - The present elective county officers remain elective except the treasurer who is to be appointed by the board of commissioners. The duties of these officers remain as at present except that the controller is given the power to carry on a continuous audit of the financial transactions of the consolidated city. He is given power to summon witnesses and demand the production of books and papers; he is also provided with an obligatory appropriation of \$25,000 to be expended in his discretion in work of investigation. No money can be drawn from the treasury except by warrant countersigned by him.

ARTICLE V. ELECTIONS. - This article simply provides for the application of the laws of the state with regard to elections. Vacancies in elective offices are to be filled for the unexpired balance of the term by the court of common pleas.

After the census of 1940 the districts of which members of the board of commissioners must be residents are to be laid out by the board of commissioners except that the present city of Pittsburgh plus annexations thereto is to remain one district.

ARTICLE VI. ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICE. - This section sets up the administrative departments. The directors of all departments and certain other officers and boards are to be appointed by the president of the board of commissioners with the consent of the board. He may remove any appointee subject to veto of his removal by vote of five commissioners. In general the directors of the departments appoint and remove the employes of their departments subject to the right of the employe to demand a hearing before the director.

ARTICLE VII. DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE. - At the head of this department is a director of finance. He is given the power to prescribe the nature and forms of all accounts to be kept in all departments of the consolidated city



including the controller's office. This is to insure a uniform system and prevent duplication. The general accounts of the city are to be kept under his immediate direction and such provision is made that they must be adequate according to the best standards of accounting. Claims against the city treasury must be signed by the director of finance and countersigned by the controller.

No contract can be made or obligation incurred under the director of finance has certified that there is an unencumbered balance in the appropriation available for the purpose. A monthly report of the condition of the appropriations must be made by the director to the board of commissioners. Every four years the board of commissioners must have the accounts audited by a certified public accountant.

The treasurer is to collect all taxes including delinquent taxes and the office of the delinquent tax collector is abolished. Tax bills are to be mailed prior to the date when taxes become due. Taxes may be paid at banks located throughout the consolidated city. The taxpayer may have the option of paying his taxes in quarterly installments and the provisions now in force in the present city of Pittsburgh with regard to discount for payment in advance and penalties for delinquency are applied to the consolidated city. Machinery is to be exempt from taxation. There is to be a single assessment of property for taxation for all purposes made by the assessor of the consolidated city, who is to be appointed by the president of the board of commissioners. He is to be assisted in making this single assessment by local assessors in each municipal division. In Pittsburgh and the cities of the third class, the assisting departments of assessment are to be the local assessors; in other divisions the local assessor is to be appointed by a committee of five, of which the school board appoints two members, the governing body of the municipality two members and these four appoint the fifth. Local assessors must possess the qualifications prescribed by the board of commissioners. They may be removed for failure to perform the





duties imposed upon them by the charter by the assessor of the consolidated city.

The local assessors are to value all property in accordance with the instructions of the assessor and the charter sets forth certain instructions which must be given. These instructions are intended to insure that the work of the local assessors will be uniform and in accordance with the best assessment practice. Upon the basis of the valuations made by the local assessors, the assessor of the consolidated city makes his assessment every three years as assessments are now made.

A board of assessment appeal is created of three members appointed by the common pleas court to which any property holder aggrieved by an assessment can apply for relief and from the board of assessment appeal a further appeal may be taken to the court of common pleas as at present.

ARTICLE VIII. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH. - This department is to be under a director of health who must be a physician of ten years professional experience. It may make health regulations which it is the duty of health authorities of each locality to carry out. It may enforce its own regulations directly in those localities which have no health authorities and it may in case of necessity act directly in other municipalities. Where a local health board fails entirely to carry out its duties, it may remove that board and administer public health in that locality at the expense of the locality. Any municipal division may surrender its health powers to the consolidated city if it will agree to pay the expenses of health administration within its borders. The health department is to provide laboratory service for those units which do not maintain laboratories of their own.

ARTICLE IX. DEPARTMENT OF SAFETY. - This department is to be under a director who is to have the powers of a sheriff with regard to the preservation of public peace and order.



In this department there is to be a police division under a superintendent. The police force is to consist of:

(a) The consolidated city police which is to be a small force organized on the general lines of the Pennsylvania state police. This force is to be employed in policing the rural sections and patrolling through-traffic streets, but any municipality may borrow one or more members or even an organized unit by paying the cost of the service.

(b) The consolidated city detective bureau which is to take over the present county detective bureau is required to keep records for the identification of criminals etc.

There is to be a traffic division charged with enforcing the traffic regulations of the consolidated city and an advisory traffic commission made up of citizens and officials.

The director of safety is required to report quarterly to the board of commissioners a record of all complaints, arrests, informations, summonses and notices of violation, together with the disposition thereof. Where a case is not disposed of within the quarter, it is to be reported again and again until finally disposed of.

There is to be also a division of inspection to take care of the enforcement of smoke regulation and other inspectional duties.

Finally there is to be a division of fire prevention and no appropriation in aid of a local fire department is to be given, unless the superintendent of this division certifies that the department is maintained in accordance with the standards set by the board of commissioners.

ARTICLE X. DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS. - The department of public works of the county is taken over in the consolidated city.

The director who is to be at the head of this department, must be an engineer with not less than ten years experience. The department has all the



powers and duties of the present department of Allegheny county and such other powers as may be given by the charter and by ordinance.

ARTICLE XI. DEPARTMENT OF WELFARE. - This department is to be administered by a director with the assistance of a board of welfare and a visiting committee for each institution. There are to be divisions of family welfare, child welfare, care of the aged and infirm, mental health and correction.

ARTICLE XII. DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION. - The present county parks and any other parks and playgrounds, etc., which may subsequently be acquired by the consolidated city are to be administered by a director of parks and recreation assisted by a park and recreation board.

The board is particularly charged with the physical development of parks, etc., the actual administration being left to the director.

Provision is made for the representation of the Pittsburgh school department and the county schools on this board. This department is authorized to cooperate with the schools in the development of recreational facilities.

ARTICLE XIII. DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING. - The planning commission of the consolidated city is to consist of eight members and a salaried director who is to be the chairman. Not more than four of these members shall be residents of any one municipality.

It is to have power to make a master plan covering planning features which relate to the consolidated city as a whole. It thus does not interfere with the functioning of local city planning commissions. Within the field assigned to it, its powers and methods of procedure are expressed in practically the same terms as those employed in the Pittsburgh charter and in the model city planning enabling act.

ARTICLE XIV. DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC ART. - This department is to be assisted by an art jury of nine persons, no more than five of whom are to reside in any one municipality. Its powers are practically the same as those now possessed by the art commission of the present city of Pittsburgh and are to be exercised





throughout the consolidated city. The art commission of the present city of Pittsburgh is abolished.

ARTICLE XV. DEPARTMENT OF PERSONNEL. - This department, besides numerous routine duties in connection with the keeping of personnel records and certification of payrolls, etc., is to examine all applicants for appointment to all but a very few positions, such as directors of the departments. Where qualifications are established by the charter, by the board of commissioners or by other boards pursuant to the charter, for any position, no person can be appointed to that position unless the department of personnel certifies that he possesses those qualifications. Otherwise the personnel department merely reports on the mental ability, education, experience, character and reputation of the applicant and the appointing officer is left free to exercise his judgment in the making of the appointment.

This department will administer any retirement pension system set up by the board of commissioners and the last section of the article contains provisions guaranteeing to the employees of Allegheny county who now have rights in the county pension fund, those rights as long as they continue to make the contributions now required. The same provision is made with regard to the employees of the present city of Pittsburgh, who, by the operation of the charter, are transferred to the service of the consolidated city, as to their rights in the Pittsburgh pension fund.

ARTICLE XVI. DEPARTMENT OF LAW. - This department is to be in charge of a director who is to be the solicitor of the consolidated city. It is to take over the duties of the present county solicitor and all other solicitors and attorneys for county offices. It is provided, however, that any officer who has a personal financial responsibility in performing the duties of his office may name the deputy solicitor who is to be his legal advisor.

A bureau of public utility relations is established in this department which is to represent the consolidated city in dealings with public utilities



and before the public service commission and the courts in public utility matters. It is to receive complaints from citizens and may, with the approval of the solicitor and the board of commissioners, represent any municipality within the consolidated city in such matters.

ARTICLE XVII. DEPARTMENT OF RESEARCH AND INFORMATION. - This department is to be in charge of a board appointed by the president of the board of commissioners. No member of this board shall have held office or have been a candidate for office within five years. It will appoint a director and other employees. The department will study matters relating to the government and administration of the consolidated city and to make recommendations with regard to its improvement. Upon request it will advise the authorities of any municipality. It is given power to gather statistics and information and to require reports from the financial officers of each municipality.

ARTICLE XVIII. DEPARTMENT OF REGIONAL TRANSIT. - This department will be administered by a director and a board consisting of six members and of the director. It is to have similar powers to those of the present Pittsburgh transit commission and the five members of that commission are to be, at the outset, members of the regional transit commission. The present Pittsburgh, however, does not lose any of its powers with regard to transit.

ARTICLE XIX. SPECIAL ASSESSMENTS. - This article provides in detail for special assessments upon abutting and non-abutting property materially benefited by an improvement. It departs from the present procedure with regard to special assessments upon abutting property in that the original assessment of benefits is made by the consolidated city assessor and that the board of viewers considers only those cases in which the property owner objects to the assessment.

ARTICLE XX. MUNICIPAL DIVISIONS. - This article reserves to the several



municipalities of the consolidated city all their powers and duties except those by this charter granted to the consolidated city. It provides for a surrender by a municipality of any of its powers only by vote of its people subject to acceptance by the board of commissioners of the consolidated city. It also provides for annexation only by a favorable vote of the people in the annexing and annexed municipalities voting separately.

ARTICLE XXI. MUNICIPAL COURTS. - This article establishes beginning with 1932, a municipal court to be composed of one judge for each 50,000 population with a few possible additional judges when the business of the court requires it. The judges of this court are to be appointed by the county court from among persons nominated by a petition signed by 500 electors. The appointments are to be made in open court and by a 2/3 vote. Municipal court judges must either be learned in the law, have had six years active business experience or have served as a magistrate, alderman, or justice of the peace for not less than six years. The judges are to receive \$5,000.00 a year, the president judge \$7,500.00 per year and the vice president judges \$6,000.00. The jurisdiction of the court is to be the same as that of the justices of the peace and aldermen except that the maximum amount which may be involved in any case is increased to \$500.00. There must be in this court a small claims division in which cases involving not more than \$50.00 may be dealt with informally with costs not to exceed \$1.00. Sessions of the court are to be held in various parts of the county to suit the convenience of litigants. The hours of the court also are to be arranged so that evening sessions may be held. A central office is to be established at which telephone and other communications may be received at any time. There is to be at least one clerk and one constable for each judge. The judges of the court are to make rules for the procedure of the court subject to supervision by the county court. Appeals from the municipal court follow the same course as appeals from the justices of the peace and aldermen at present



except that the right of appeal in small claims of less than \$50.00 may be limited as far as may be under the constitution.

ARTICLE XXII. RATIFICATION AND AMENDMENT. - This article provides for the submission of the charter to the vote of the people on the fourth Tuesday of June 1929, and provides for its amendment in the manner prescribed in the constitution.

ARTICLE XXIII. MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS AND SCHEDULE. - This article sets up the districts of which the members of the board of commissioners must be residents. District No. 1 of which three members must be residents consists of the present city of Pittsburgh. District No. 2, of the city of McKeesport and of the boroughs and townships east of the Monongahela River and south of the Allegheny except the townships of Penn, Plum and Wilkins. District No. 3 consists of the cities of Clairton and Duquesne and of all the boroughs and townships west and south of the Monongahela and Ohio rivers except the townships of North Fayette, Findlay, Moon and Crescent and the borough of Coraopolis. District No. 4 consists of the remainder of Allegheny county outside the city of Pittsburgh.

Justices of the peace, aldermen and constables are to serve out the balance of the terms for which they were elected. Justices of the peace, aldermen and constables whose terms expire on the first Monday of June 1930 are to continue in office until January 1, 1932. Magistrates in the present city of Pittsburgh are to remain in existence until January 1, 1932.

This article also contains the schedule of provisions for carrying it into complete operation. The parts of the charter relating to elections are to take effect upon its ratification, all other provisions except those which are expressly stated to be effective at any earlier date or later date go into effect on the first Monday of January 1930.



